

Claims 1 through 19 are pending in the present application.

The Office Action dated July 29, 2002, objected to claim 13 for informal reasons. In addition, the Action rejected claims 1 through 19 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,715,555 to Reber et al. ("the Reber patent") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,982,445 to Eyer et al. ("the Eyer patent").

A rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103 requires that the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art. All of the claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art. M.P.E.P. §2143.03. Significantly, the prior art itself must suggest the modification or provide the reason or motivation for making such modification. In re Laskowski, 871 F.2d 115, 117, 10 USPQ 2d 1397, 1398-1399 (CAFC, 1989). "The invention must be viewed not after the blueprint has been drawn by the inventor, but as it would have been perceived in the state of the art that existed at the time the invention was made." Sensonic Inc. v. Aerosonic Corp., 38 USPQ 2d 1551, 1554 (CAFC, 1996), citing Interconnect Planning Corp. v. Feil, 774 F. 2d 1132, 1138, 227 USPQ 543, 547 (CAFC, 1985). Additionally, if an independent claim is nonobvious under 35 U.S.C. §103, then any claim depending therefrom is nonobvious. M.P.E.P. §2143.03.

It is respectfully submitted that present claim 1 is patentable over each the cited references, and that claim 1 defines an invention that is neither disclosed nor suggested by either reference, or the cited combination thereof.

The Reber patent, as suggested by Action, discloses a smart laundry system requiring a plurality of material items (20), each having an electronic tag (22) that is either preprogrammed or programmed by a tag programming device (24). Material items (20) with tags (22) cooperate with a laundry machine (26), a drying machine (28), or an automatic folding/sorting machine (30), each of which has a controller (32), (34), and (36), respectively, and a tag communicating device (38), (40), and (42), respectively. The purposes of the system as disclosed in the Reber patent include; reading laundering instruction from electronic tags on the variety of material items, updating the laundering cycle count stored by the electronic tag, and processing waste water for reuse in subsequent washes.

It is noted that the Reber patent, as suggested in the Action, fails to disclose or suggest a controller, coupled to a label reader, a communication unit and an operation unit so as to receive information from the label reader, to send a request to one or more information interfaces through the communication unit, to receive a response from one or more information interfaces, and adjust operation parameters of the operation unit in accordance with the response. Further, it is also noted that the Reber patent fails to disclose or suggest that the "request" and "response" be "formatted as documents capable of being exchanged in a distributed, decentralized environment."

The Eyer patent is distinctively directed to a hypertext markup language (HTML) protocol that allows a designer to adapt the HTML resources of the Internet for use in a television environment. The Eyer patent suggests that a display data signal be processed to provide a signal suitable for reproduction on a television or similar video display. (col. 4, lines 36-38). Further, the Eyer patent suggests that the

display data may include URLs representing function calls which are implemented in accordance with a user command processor for allowing selective control of functions of a television or a non-television related device. (col. 5, lines 43-46).

It is respectfully submitted that one of ordinary skill in the art would not have combined the teachings of the Reber patent with those of the Eyer patent. There is no need, as suggested by the Action, for combining the HTML protocol defined by the Eyer patent with the smart laundry system defined by the Reber patent to facilitate communication between a washing machine and a remote server, at least because the smart laundry system as disclosed in the Reber patent is essentially a closed system. Further, the purposes of the system as disclosed in the Reber patent and identified above, are not, contrary to that suggested by the Action, furthered by incorporating the HTML protocol as defined by the Eyer patent. Hence, the Reber patent fails to suggest the cited combination or provide a reason or motivation for making such combination.

Moreover, it respectfully submitted that the Eyer patent, like the Reber patent, fails to disclose or suggest the controller relationship defined by claim 1. The Eyer patent suggests, as indicated above, the use of on-screen textual and graphical displays using HTML and a television decoder to call up hyperlinks to different pages of HTML-coded data and function calls for controlling television and non-television appliance functions. (col. 13, lines 44-50). The Eyer patent does not disclose or suggest a controller, coupled to a label reader, a communication unit and an operation unit so as to receive information from the label reader, to send a request to one or more information interfaces through the communication unit, to receive a response from one or more information interfaces, and

adjust operation parameters of the operation unit in accordance with the response. Thus, all of the elements of claim 1 are not taught or suggested by the cited references.

Further, it should be noted that the purposes of the invention defined by claim 1, which include in particular, providing improved techniques for managing operation of radio frequency identification (RFID) systems, such that compatibility and flexibility thereof can be enhanced, are not necessarily facilitated by the decoder-HTML protocol disclosed in the Eyer patent.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted, at least for the foregoing reasons, that claim 1 is patentable over each of cited references and/or the cited combination thereof. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection, and allowance of claim 1, are respectfully requested.

Claims 2 through 8, which depend either directly or indirectly from claim 1, are patentable at least for the reasons stated above with respect to claim 1. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection, and allowance of present claims 2 through 8, are respectfully requested.

Regarding claim 9, it is respectfully submitted that claim 9 is patentable over the cited combination of references, and that claim 9 defines an invention that is neither disclosed nor suggested thereby.

The Reber patent, as noted above, clearly fails to disclose or suggest that a "request" and "response" be "formatted as documents capable of being exchanged in a distributed, decentralized environment." Moreover, it is respectfully

submitted that one of ordinary skill in the art would not have combined the teachings of the Reber patent with those of the Eyer patent, as there is no need to do so. At least for the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1, there is no need to combine the decoder-HTML protocol defined by the Eyer patent with the essentially closed laundry system defined by the Reber patent. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that claim 9 is patentable over the cited combination of references. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection, and allowance of claim 9, are respectfully requested.

Claims 10 through 17, which depend either directly or indirectly from claim 9, are patentable at least for the reasons stated above with respect to claim 9. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection, and allowance of present claims 10 through 17, are respectfully requested.

Regarding claim 18, it is respectfully submitted that claim 18 is patentable over the cited combination of references, and that claim 18 defines an invention that is neither disclosed nor suggested thereby.

The Reber patent clearly fails to disclose or suggest "a receiving means for receiving a response comprising an XML document from the remote device, the receiving means including a micro XML parser". In addition, it is respectfully submitted that one of ordinary skill in the art would not have combined the teachings of the Reber patent with those of the Eyer patent, as there is no need to do so, for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1. Hence, claim 18 is patentable at least because the cited references fail to suggest or provide a reason or motivation for combining the decoder-HTML protocol defined by the Eyer patent with the closed laundry system

defined by the Reber patent. Further, it is respectfully submitted that the response XML document defined by claim 18 is not functionally equivalent to the decoder-HTML/HTVP protocol defined by the Eyer patent. Clearly the decoder-HTML/HTVP protocol of the Eyer patent does not facilitate cooperation with a receiving means "including a micro XML parser". Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection, and allowance of claim 1, are respectfully requested.

Claim 19, which depends from claim 18, is patentable at least for the reasons stated above with respect to claim 18. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection, and allowance of present claim 19, are respectfully requested.

In sum, it is respectfully submitted that the pending present claims are patentable over each cited reference and/or any combination thereof. Thus, this application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of all rejections of the claims are respectfully requested.

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1, 9 and 13 follows:

1. (Amended) An apparatus comprising:

a label reader capable of reading information from a label;

a communication unit capable of communicating information to one or more information interfaces;

an operation unit having one or more operational parameters that may be adjusted; and

a controller, coupled to the label reader, the communication unit and the operation unit, arranged to (1) receive information from the label reader, (2) send a request to one or more of the information interfaces through the communication unit, (3) receive a response from [the] one or more information [interface] interfaces, and (4) adjust the operation parameters of the operation unit in accordance with the response,

[where in] wherein the request and the response are formatted as documents capable of being exchanged in a distributed, decentralized environment.

9. (Amended) An apparatus comprising:

a memory; and

a processor coupled to the memory and operative to read information from a tag, communicate the information to an information interface, receive a response from the information interface, and adjust an operation parameter of an operation unit in accordance with the response,

[where in] wherein the request and the response are formatted as documents capable of being exchanged in a distributed, decentralized environment.

13. (Amended) The apparatus according to claim 9, wherein the operation unit comprises a consumer [product-type] product apparatus.